

Customizing Business Relationships: Effectively Serving Customers with Disabilities

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Disability/Adult**

www.onestops.info

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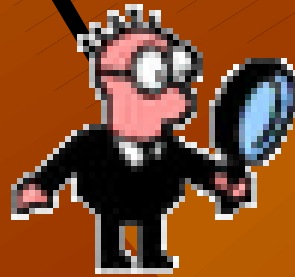
- National Technical Assistance Center supporting 26 DOL/ODEP Customized Employment & WorkFORCE Action grantees
- Information & resources to the workforce development system on disability issues
- www.onestops.info
- Information on Demand: 1-888-886-9898
- Publications: Access for All; e-announcements; white papers, etc.

Workforce Development System: Customer Characteristics

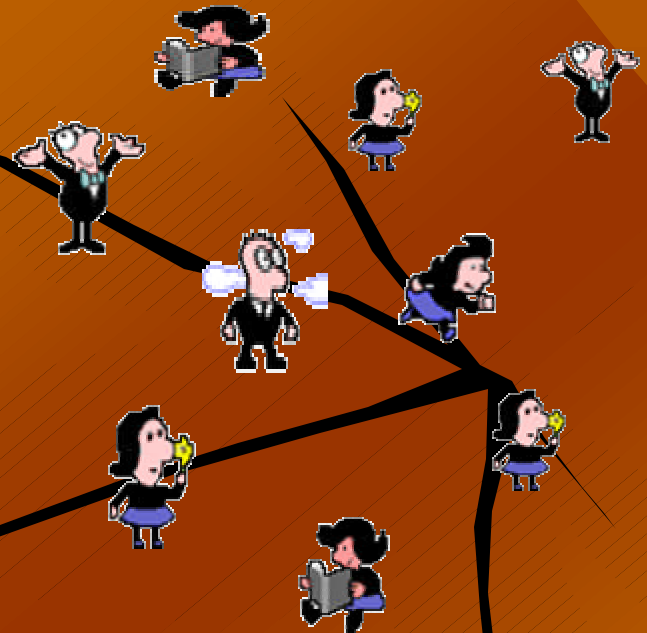
- ESL
- Disability
- Health issues
- Poverty
- Homelessness
- Family issues
- Inexperience
- Low self-esteem
- Cultural issues
- Older workers
- Minority status
- Lack of education
- Undiagnosed disability
- Lack of transportation

Current Practice: Labor Market Approach

Career Specialist



Each applicant is considered with respect to the demands of the employer.



Labor Market Approach

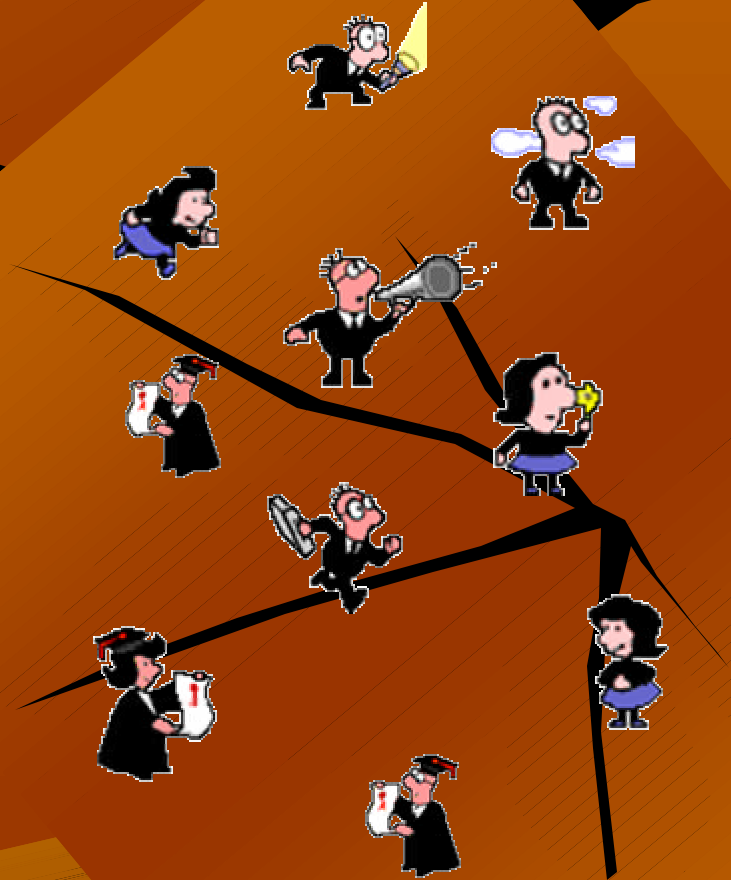
Those with more skills and less complexity rise to the top. Those with less skills and more complexity are considered last.



Success with the Labor Market Approach



Some are chosen as having the skills to meet employer's needs, as indicated in the job description.



Why Customize?



Successful applicant



Applicant w/disability or other life complexities

While certain applicants are successful using a Labor Market approach, those with more complex lives are often left out, again and again. For those individuals, a *customized* approach is needed for employment success.

Customized Employment

Customized employment means individualizing the employment relationship between employees and employers in ways that meet the needs of both. It is based on an individualized determination of the strengths, needs, and interests of the person with a disability, and is also designed to meet the specific needs of the employer.

Meeting the Needs of Your Community

Customized Employment is an individualized approach to providing access to employment for job seekers with complex lives

- TANF recipients
- Veterans
- Ex Felons
- People with Disabilities
- People in any categorical program

From Job Matching to Customization

- Revolving doors: job matching often leads to only short term “success”
- People with barriers to employment can’t take a job “off the rack”... We must tailor the process
 - Know the job seeker
 - Know the employer

1) Customized Job Development: Know your Job Seeker

- Individually driven: this means the starting point is getting to know the job seeker
- ✓ Presumption of “employability” & “job readiness”
- ✓ Preferences/Interests
- ✓ Skills
- ✓ Abilities
- ✓ Tasks: to be compiled for use with employer
- ✓ Personality

2) Customized Job Development: Know your Employers

- What makes them unique?
- How do they operate/how do things get done?
- What is the culture/mission?
- What are their biggest challenges

Create a list of job tasks:

- Who is responsible for what?
- What tasks bog employers down?
- What tasks are not getting done?

Methods of Getting to Know Employers

- Informational Interviews: “I’d like to find out more about your business so I can better understand the human resource needs in your industry”.
- Tours: look for ways in which your customers can add value by increasing production/profit or improving operations.

Keep it Short!

Identify Specific Local Employers

Generate a broad list of potential employers in the community that have needs/tasks consistent with those the candidate offers



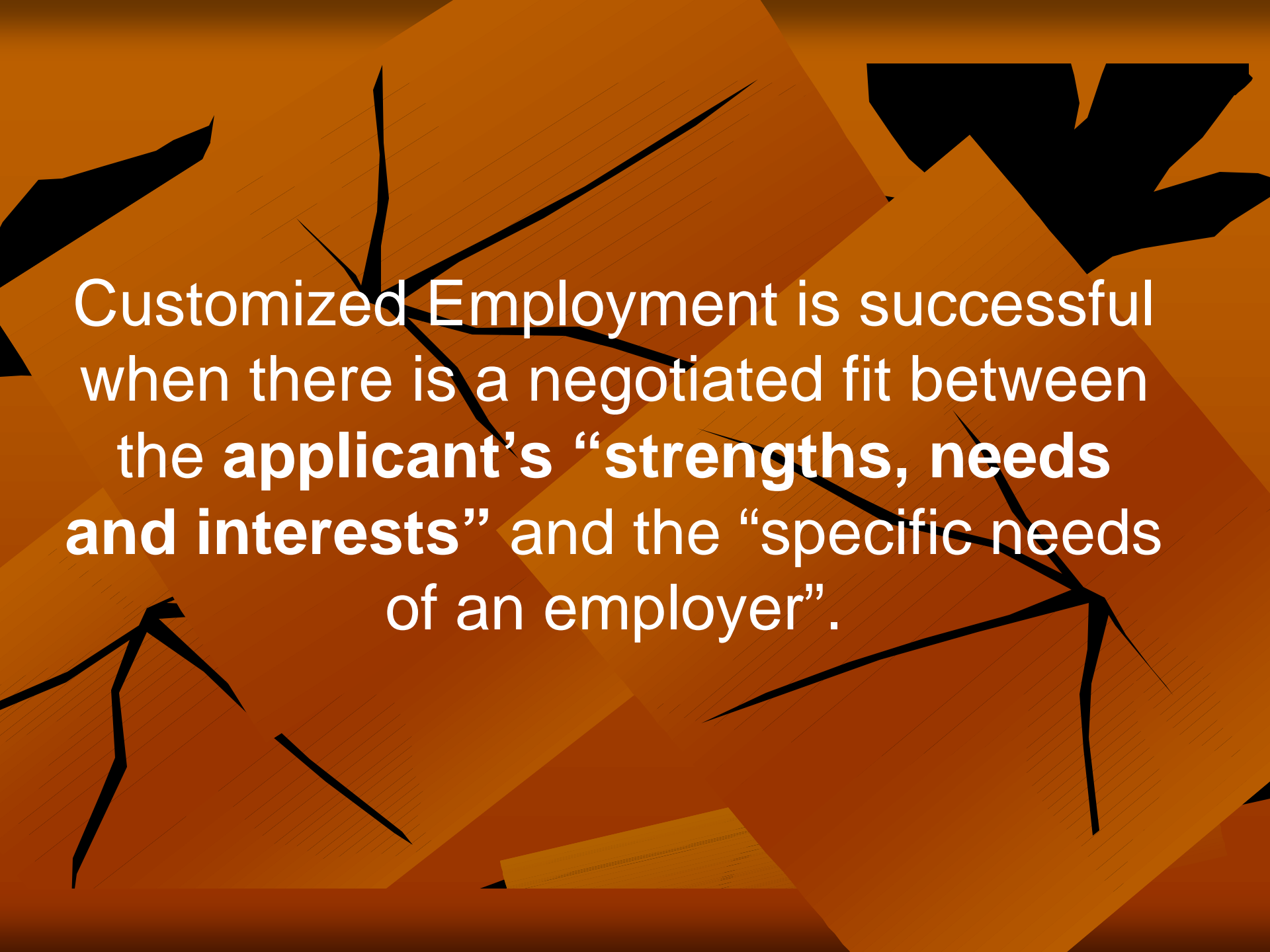
Bob's Bike Shop
Ski and Sports Club
EpiCycle
Bobby's Rollerway
Target: Bike Department



“Nothing beats showing me how
you can help me meet my
needs”

employer

Working Relationships



Customized Employment is successful when there is a negotiated fit between the **applicant's “strengths, needs and interests”** and the “specific needs of an employer”.

Customized Employment Strategies: Beyond Job Descriptions

- Carved Job: Job based on some tasks derived from a single traditional job description
- Negotiated Job: New job description based on tasks derived from a variety of jobs
- Created Jobs: Newly developed job description based on unmet needs of the workplace
- Micro-enterprises: Small businesses based on unmet needs of a local market

Negotiating for Employer Gain

- Identify how specific candidate will contribute to employer's operations - clearly stated benefit
- Develop a proposal: use job seeker tasks/contributions as template; select tasks from employer needs list that overlap
- Potential negotiation points: job responsibilities, hours, outcome expectations

Watch your Language!

QuickTime™ and a
TIFF (Uncompressed) decompressor
are needed to see this picture.

- Every conversation you have with an employer about an individual with a disability contains both implicit and explicit disability awareness education
- Conversations focus on tasks, skills & abilities.
- “People first” language.
- Permission to disclose disability?

Watch your Language!

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- Speak in the employer's business language.
- We are negotiating with the employer for a mutual job fit not “to give a job to a person with a disability”.
- We are offering to assist the employer “with his or her resource needs”. We are not asking the employer to help us in “placing our customers with disabilities”.
- Talk about “needs” and “style” not “disabilities”.

Employment Supports

- All workers require different types, levels and intensity of supports
- Customized employment opportunities include the expectation that reasonable accommodations and supports will be available to the individual and the employer. Supports should be individualized and flexible based on the unique needs of both the applicant and employer.

adaptive equipment

personal assistance

benefits counseling

on the job training

Successful Partnerships

ESTABLISH...	AS EVIDENCED BY...
trust	respecting needs
goals to benefit everyone	outcomes w/mutual gain
LT relationships	ongoing contact, responsiveness
service competence	qual performance
customer satisfaction focus	customer satisfaction

Many Partners, One System

- Assistive technology: Job Accommodation Network (JAN) www.jan.wvu.edu/
- Benefits Planning: BPAO projects www.socialsecurity.gov/work/ServiceProviders/BPAODirectory.html
- On-the-Job Training: Public VR - mandated One-Stop partner; MR/DD system; Mental Health system
- NCWD/A: for information and resources on providing quality services to job seekers with disabilities through the One-Stop system www.onestops.info



"Never desert your own line of talent. Be what nature intended you for, and you will succeed." - Sydney Smith

"Our work is the presentation of our capabilities." - Goethe